AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows.

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1. (Original) A method of identifying an agent effective in modulating Stat3-dependent cell proliferation, said method comprising the steps of:

i) incubating TEL/Etv6 with a compound;

ii) detecting TEL/Etv6 activity; and

iii) determining a compound-induced modulation in the TEL/Etv6 activity relative to when said compound is absent, wherein an alteration of the TEL/Etv6 activity in the presence of the compound is indicative of an agent effective in modulating Stat3-dependent cell proliferation.

Claim 2. (Currently amended) The method according to claim 1, wherein said modulation is inhibition of TEL/Etv6 activity ~~and said agent is effective in enhancing cytokine-induced inhibition of cell proliferation~~.

Claim 3. (Original) The method according to claim 1, wherein said modulation is activation of TEL/Etv6 activity and said agent is effective in inhibiting proliferation of cells expressing Stat3, wherein said Stat3 is phosphorylated.

Claim 4. (Original) The method of claim 3, wherein said cell proliferation is independent of ras activity.

Claim 5. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein said cell proliferation is of a melanoma or carcinoma.

Claim 6. (Currently amended) A method for identifying an agent effective in modulating Stat3-dependent cell proliferation, said method comprising the steps of:

(i) incubating at least one TEL/Etv6 polypeptide selected from the group consisting of TEL/Etv6, a variant and a fragment thereof, with ~~a binding partner~~ Stat3, a variant or fragment thereof, in the presence of a test compound; and

(ii) determining whether the presence of a test compound modulates the interaction between said TEL/Etv6 polypeptide and said ~~binding partner~~ Stat3, a variant or fragment thereof, relative to when said test compound is absent.

Claim 7. (Cancel)

Claim 8. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 6 wherein the fragment of TEL/Etv6 is between 50 and 350 amino acids in length.

Claim 9. (Canceled)

Claim 10. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising confirming that ~~the test~~ said compound is a modulator of Stat3-dependent cell proliferation.

Claim 11. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 6, wherein said TEL/Etv6 polypeptide or the binding partner is labelled with a detectable label, and the other is immobilised on a solid support.

Claim 12. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 6, wherein the modulation is inhibition of said interaction.

Claim 13. (Currently amended) The method according to claim 12 comprising the step of confirming that the test compound ~~substance~~ inhibits cell proliferation of a cytokine-sensitive cancer.

Claim 14. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 12, comprising determining whether said test compound inhibits the physical association between TEL/Etv6 and Stat3.

Claim 15. (Currently amended) The method according to claim 6 said method comprising the steps of:

(i) contacting a cell expressing TEL/Etv6, a variant or fragment thereof which has the ability to interact with said ~~binding partner~~ Stat3, a variant or fragment thereof, with a test compound, and

(ii) identifying ~~substances~~ the compounds which inhibit said interaction in said cell.

Claim 16. (Currently amended) The method according to claim 15, said method comprising:

(i) providing a cell capable of expressing the TEL/Etv6 polypeptide and ~~its binding partner~~ Stat3, a variant or fragment thereof and a reporter gene construct,

(ii) contacting the cell with a test compound, whereby inhibition by the test compound of binding between the TEL/Etv6 polypeptide and ~~the binding partner~~ Stat3, a variant or fragment thereof can be observed as a reduction of reporter gene expression in a reporter gene construct.

Claim 17. (Withdrawn) A mammalian cell capable of expressing a TEL/Etv6 polypeptide, its binding partner, and a reporter gene construct, whereby binding between said TEL/Etv6 polypeptide and said binding partner can be observed by reporter gene expression.

Claim 18. (Withdrawn) A method of inhibiting Stat3 expressing cancer cell proliferation, said method comprising contacting a cancer cell expressing Stat3 with an effective amount of an activator of TEL in an amount sufficient to inhibit Stat3 activity.

Claim 19. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 18, wherein said Stat3 is phosphorylated.

Claim 20. (Withdrawn) A method of inhibiting cytokine sensitive cancers, said method comprising contacting a cytokine-sensitive cancer cell with an effective amount of an inhibitor of TEL activity in an amount sufficient to enhance Stat3 activity.

Claim 21. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 20, wherein the inhibition of activity is caused by down-regulating TEL/Etv6, or a homologue thereof in the cell.

Claim 22. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 21, wherein said down-regulation is caused by RNAi.

Claim 23. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 22, wherein said down-regulation is caused by an at least partially double-stranded RNA of between 20 and 25 bps in length, comprising an RNA sequence encoding a portion of TEL/Etv6 or a homologue thereof.

Claim 24. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 20, wherein said TEL inhibitor is an antibody or antibody fragment.

Claim 25. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 20, wherein the inhibition of activity is caused by inhibiting the interaction of TEL/Etv6, or a homologue thereof with a binding partner in the cell.

Claim 26. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 25 wherein the binding partner is Stat3.

Claim 27. (cancel).

Claim 28. (cancel).

Claim 29. (cancel).

Claim 30. (cancel).

Claim 31. (Withdrawn) A method of inhibiting cell proliferation of a cytokine-sensitive cancer cell comprising at least partially double-stranded RNA, which comprises an RNA sequence encoding TEL/Etv6, a homologue or a fragment thereof.

Claim 32. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 31, wherein said dsRNA is an siRNA duplex of between 20 and 25 bps.

Claim 33. (Withdrawn) A method of treating a patient suffering from a cytokine-sensitive cancer comprising administering to said patient an effective amount of an inhibitor of TEL/Etv6 activity.

Claim 34. (Withdrawn) A method of treating a patient suffering from STAT3 expressing cancer comprising administering to said patient an effective amount of an activator of TEL/Etv6 activity.

Claim 35. (New) A method of identifying an agent effective in enhancing cytokine-induced inhibition of cell proliferation, said method comprising the steps of:

i) incubating TEL/Etv6 with a compound;

ii) detecting TEL/Etv6 activity; and

iii) determining a compound-induced modulation in the TEL/Etv6 activity relative to when said compound is absent, wherein an alteration of the TEL/Etv6 activity in the presence of the compound is indicative of an agent effective in modulating Stat3-dependent cell proliferation.

Claim 36. (New) The method according to claim 35, wherein said modulation is inhibition of TEL/Etv6 activity.